

"Fire is made--or has been made up to recent times--by the Jibaros in the same primitive way as by other savage Indian tribes, by friction, two sticks of the tree called uruchi numi being rubbed against or drilled into each other. Uruchi numi means 'cotton tree'; this tree however is not identical with the cotton tree they now cultivate, and from which they obtain their yarn by spinning, and I have not been able to identify it. As previously stated, the two sticks used for drilling fire were called uyula and the bag in which they were formerly carried is still called by the same name. The Jibaros very seldom make fire afresh; generally embers are found in some of the numerous fire-places in a house and, as we have seen, the fires are as a rule kept burning the whole night. The fire-places are on the earth, one before each sleeping rack, and are formed by three or four big logs of the [115] chonta palm pointing to a common centre, and the ends of them serve as a basis for the cooking-pots. To light the fire in the morning, if it has gone out, the Indian has only to push the ends of the logs together, to place a few chips in the centre, and blow gently."

"The way the fires are maintained is very ingenious: three large logs, about one to one-and-a-half feet in diameter and ten to twelve feet long, are placed with their points converging to a centre, at equal angles; and on the approximated inner ends the pot is stood. As the logs are consumed, the fire is fed merely by pushing them a little further in towards the centre; and if a stronger fire is required, smaller wood is thrown on the always red-hot and smouldering ends and fanned for a few moments with a fan of plaited grass."

Around the post located at the focus of the ellipse near the women's door are found all the household utensils; the space between it and the door represents the kitchen. Here a sort of bamboo screen hangs from the roof, in which are placed the various culinary vessels. There are as many fires as families in the house. Each fire is made up of three big sticks of wood, 30 to 45 cm. in diameter and 3 to 3^m50 long, placed at 120° angles from each other and converging at the same point. It is there that the pot is placed: as fast as the sticks of wood are consumed, they are pushed little by little toward the center (1).

1. Simson, op. cit., page 386.

The savage procures fire by the method of boring or [589] whirling (fig. 16). Small holes are made in a board of soft and perfectly dry wood, in which the Indian whirls the pointed end of a stick of very hard wood. The friction causes the formation of a very fine wood powder which, as a result of the heat developed, finally bursts into flames. The operation is long and tiring and many individuals take turns before arriving at success.

25: Vigna--41 [5]
116, 354, 513, 372, 415

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Jivaro

The fire is always kept lit. At night it burns at the foot of the sleeper and keeps him warm, so that the Jivaro has no need of sheets or blankets. In illness, in order to conserve heat, they use a piece of cloth that serves as loin cloth. They do not have a kitchen; the fire that burns at the foot of the bed serves for hearth and here, they prepare their food. Hollow calabashes are used for water. When they go on a journey, they take along a burning firebrand. [42]

They make fire by rubbing two sticks, both of which are taken either from the liana (kangum) or the bias. They do not use flints. Farabee tells a Chiwaro-legend concerning the origin of fire. Sr. F. T. Munis (probably should read: Mufloa) told him the story.